

Invisible Hand Seminar
Led and organized by Daniel Klein (dklein@gmu.edu)

This seminar serves the Adam Smith program community. Contact me to receive the paper.

It is OK to attend without having read the paper.

We go to dinner afterward.

Select Saturdays 4:00 - 5:45, Buchanan Hall D180

Funding provided in part by the **Institute for Humane Studies**.

Saturday Sept. 7:

[Graham McAleer](#), Loyola University, Maryland: **Lord Kames's Moral Theory in Relation to Adam Smith**

Saturday Sept. 28:

[Jacob Sider Jost](#), Dickinson College: **Olaudah Equiano and Adam Smith, or, What's Interesting about the Interesting Narrative?**

Saturday Oct. 19:

[Barrett Turner](#), Mount St. Mary's University: **On Justice, Can Aquinas and Smith Be Assimilated to One Another?**

Saturday Nov. 9:

[John Nye](#), George Mason University: **The Real Story of British and French Free Trade**

Saturday Nov. 16:

[Paul Mueller](#), The King's College: **Adam Smith and Moral Judgment: Why People Tend to Make Better Judgments within Liberal Institutions**

PAST PROGRAMS:

SPRING 2019:

Funding provided in part by the **Institute for Humane Studies**.

Saturday February 9:

[Ryan Streeter](#), Director of Domestic Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute (AEI)
David Hume's 'Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth'

[Link to the Hume essay](#)

Saturday March 2:

[Charles Butterworth](#), Professor of Government & Politics, University of Maryland
Alfarabi and Averroes: An Introduction to Their Thought

Saturday March 23:

[Yuval Levin](#), Ethics & Public Policy Center, and editor of [National Affairs](#)
The Conservative Liberalism of Edmund Burke

(based on *The Great Debate: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of Right and Left* (Basic, 2014),
[link to Amazon page](#))

Saturday April 20:

Daniel Klein, George Mason University:

The Man within the Breast, the Supreme Impartial Spectator, and Other Impartial Spectators in Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*

Coauthored with Erik Matson and Colin Doran, [link to paper at SSRN](#)

Saturday April 27 (**special time: 3:30-5:10pm**):

Helena Rosenblatt, Professor of History, City University of New York:

The Liberal Vision of Benjamin Constant

(Related to: *The Lost History of Liberalism: From Ancient Rome to the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton UP, 2018). [Link to Amazon page](#))

Reading: Constant, [The Liberty of Ancients Compared with That of the Moderns](#) (1819)

FALL 2018:

Funding provided in part by the **Institute for Humane Studies**.

Saturday September 8:

Timur Kuran, Duke University: [Sponsored by the Association for the Study of Free Institutions \(ASFI\)](#)

["Islam and Economic Performance: Historical and Contemporary Links"](#) *J. Econ. Lit.* (June 2018)

Saturday September 29:

Charles Griswold, Boston University:

Co-sponsored by IHS

[Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith: A Philosophical Encounter](#) (Routledge, 2018)

Saturday October 20:

Garett Jones, GMU:

Co-sponsored by IHS

10 Percent Less Democracy (a book in progress)

Friday November 9:

Co-sponsored by IHS

Off-site event: [Arthur Melzer](#) will be speaking on esotericism in Arlington at the Westin Arlington Gateway Hotel on Friday Nov. 9. Details to follow, or contact me.

Saturday November 17:

Roger Koppl, Syracuse University:

Co-sponsored by IHS

[Expert Failure](#) (Camb. UP, 2018)

SPRING 2018:

Funding provided in part by the **Institute for Humane Studies**.

Saturday February 17:

Nils Karlson, Ratio Institute, Stockholm: [Statecraft and Liberal Reform in Advanced](#)

[Democracies](#) (Palgrave, 2017)

Saturday March 3:

Robin Hanson, George Mason University: [The Elephant in the Brain: Hidden Motives in Everyday Life](#), coauthored with Kevin Simler (OUP, 2018).

Saturday April 7:

Daniel Klein, GMU, [Adam Smith, David Hume, Liberalism, and Esotericism](#). Klein will talk about esotericism and the project underway. For advance reading, you might read Arthur

Melzer's chapter "[A Beginner's Guide to Esoteric Reading](#)," from his *Philosophy between the Lines: The Lost History of Esoteric Writing* (UChicagoP, 2014). You may also wish to listen to [the podcast](#).

Saturday April 21:

[Jerry Weinberger](#), Michigan State University: Benjamin Franklin's America: Ben Wasn't as American as Apple Pie; he was as American as the Corn Dog. Recommended: Professor Weinberger's 2005 book [Benjamin Franklin Unmasked](#).

Saturday April 28:

[Thomas Merrill](#), American University: "Hume's Revolution: Divine Right Monarchy and the Origins of Liberalism"

FALL 2017:

Funding provided in part by the **John Templeton Foundation** through a grant from the **Institute for Humane Studies**.

Saturday September 16:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[Richard Boyd](#), Georgetown University:

["Reappraising the Scottish Moralists and Civil Society,"](#) chapter 3 of his book [Uncivil Society: The Perils of Pluralism and the Making of Modern Liberalism](#) (Lexington Books, 2004).

Saturday September 30:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[Erik Matson](#), George Mason University:

"Hume's Way of Reasonableness in Epistemology and in Political Economy"

Saturday October 14:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[Alberto Mingardi](#), Instituto Bruno Leoni:

"Thomas Hodgskin and the Industrial Revolution"

Saturday November 11:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[James Otteson](#), Wake Forest University:

"Adam Smith's Libertarian Paternalism"

Saturday December 2:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[Ryan Hanley](#), Marquette University:

[Love's Enlightenment: Rethinking Charity in Modernity](#) – Chapter 4: Smith on Sympathy.

Past programs:

SPRING 2017

Saturday February 11:

Daniel Klein, GMU:

"Liberalism 1.0" – Klein will redo [a January 2017 lecture](#). The PPT file is [here](#).

With comments by **Mark Koyama**, GMU.

Saturday February 25:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[Jerry Z. Muller](#), Catholic University of America

“Hayek’s Critique of Scientism and the Contemporary Misuse of Performance Measures,” a draft chapter of his PUP book in progress: *Metric Fixation: Our Age of Excessive, Misleading and Counterproductive Measurement*.

Saturday April 1:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Assoc. for Study of Free](#)

[Institutions](#)

[Donald Livingston](#), Emory University (emeritus):

“Hume on Republicanism, Size and Scale, the Perfect Commonwealth, and American Secession”

Saturday April 15:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[Andrew Sabl](#), Yale University:

“Hume’s Politics: Coordination and Crisis in the *History of England*”

Saturday April 29:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [Templeton/IHS](#)

[Toni Vogel Carey](#), Ronin Institute:

“Adam Smith, Evolution, and the Invisible Hand”

Fall 2016

Saturday September 17:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [IHS/John Templeton Foundation](#)

[James Stacey Taylor](#), The College of New Jersey:

“Informed Consent and Compensated Donation for Plasma”

Advance reading: [Here](#)

Saturday September 24:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [IHS/John Templeton Foundation](#)

[Nicolas Capaldi](#), Loyola University New Orleans:

“Liberty and Equality in Political Economy” ([link](#)), coauthored by Gordon Lloyd

Advance readings: 1. [Chapter summaries](#) 2. [Chapter 12](#)

Saturday October 15:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [IHS/John Templeton Foundation](#)

[Larry Arnhart](#), Northern Illinois University:

“The Evolutionary Science of Smithian and Hayekian Liberalism”

Saturday October 29:

Erik Matson, GMU Econ PhD student:

“Hume and Smith on Utility, Agreeableness, Propriety, and Moral Approval”, coauthored with Colin Doran and Daniel B. Klein

Saturday November 12:

EVENT COSPONSOR: [TBA](#)

Richard Fink, Northstar Guidance, LLC:

“Advancing the American Dream: A Hayekian Approach”

Spring 2016

(This term we read Locke in the reading group.)

Saturday February 6:

Daniel Klein, George Mason University:

“Adam Smith’s Non-foundationalism”

Saturday Feb 20:

[Anthony Randazzo](#), NYU and Reason Foundation:

“Are Economists Influenced by Their Moral Worldviews? Evidence from the Moral Foundations of Economists Questionnaire” ([link](#)), coauthored by Jonathan Haidt

Saturday March 26:

[David Azerrad](#), Heritage Foundation:

“What Was Locke Up to? John Locke and the Origins of Modernity”

([suggested advance reading](#))

EVENT COSPONSOR: IHS/John Templeton Foundation

Saturday April 9:

Scott Drylie, GMU PhD student:

“Delicate Influence, Not State Provision: Historical Foundations to Re-interpret Adam Smith’s Position on Education”

Saturday April 23:

[Michael P. Zuckert](#), University of Notre Dame:

“Launching Liberalism: Philosophic Anthropology and the Leviathan State” ([link](#), [doc](#))

EVENT COSPONSOR: IHS/John Templeton Foundation

Fall 2015

This term we made a theme of esotericism.

Saturday Sept 19: [Harrison Searles](#), GMU PhD student:

“Hume and Smith, Discreet Proto-Darwinists?”

Saturday Oct 3: [Jason Briggeman](#), GMU PhD, Central Texas College:

“Searching for Justification of the Policy of Pre-Market Approval of Pharmaceuticals”
([link](#); [MR post](#))

Saturday Oct 17: [Thomas W. Merrill](#), American University:

Hume and the Politics of Enlightenment ([link](#) to book)

Saturday Nov 7: [Nelson Lund](#), George Mason University School of Law:

“Montesquieu, Judicial Degeneracy, and the U.S. Supreme Court” ([link](#))

Saturday December 5: [Pavel Kuchar](#), University of Guanajuato, Mexico, presenting his paper coauthored with Luis Sanchez-Mier:

“Classical Liberalism in Mexican Economic Thought”

Spring 2015

Saturday Jan 31: Dan Klein, "Ten Thousand Commandments: Adam Smith's *Moral Sentiments* as a Critique of Interventionism"

Saturday Feb 7: Colin Doran, GMU Econ PhD student, "Adam Smith's Misrepresentation of David Hume: An Unsolved Mystery"

Saturday March 21: Gabriel Roth, retired from the World Bank, "[Moving the Road Sector into the Market Economy](#)"

Saturday April 4: [Paul D. Mueller](#), as of Aug 2015 Assistant Professor at [The King's College in Manhattan](#), "Who Best Represents Impartiality? The Higher We Go, The More Partial Our Judgments"

Saturday April 18: Daniel Klein, Daniel Houser, and Gonzalo Schwarz (GMU alum and now at the Atlas Network), presenting their 2015 *Rationality and Society* paper also authored by Xiaofei Pan, "[A Demand for Encompassment: A Hayekian Experimental Narrative about Political Psychology](#)"

Also recommend as background for this seminar: (1) [H. Allen Orr's review of recent David Sloan Wilson book](#); (2) [Video Hayek interview](#) from 43:00-52:00.

FALL 2014

Saturday September 13: **Daniel Klein**, GMU Econ, will discuss the website he authored, and co-created with Ryan Daza, [Lost Language, Lost Liberalism](#).

Saturday October 4: **Mark Koyama**, GMU Econ, will present his paper with Meng (Melanie) Xue, "The Literary Inquisition: The Persecution of Intellectuals and Human Capital Accumulation in Imperial China."

Saturday October 18: **Jordan Weed**, GMU Econ undergrad: "Island Nations and Success: A Review of Scholarly Literature."

Saturday November 8: **John Robinson**, GMU Econ PhD student, will present his dissertation in progress, on the theory of property in the Scottish Enlightenment. A main theme is the clear centrality of the exclusion view of property, as opposed to the bundle-of-rights view.

Saturday November 22: **Daniel Klein**, GMU Econ, "[Three Frank Questions to Discipline Your Theorizing](#)," a chapter in *Theorizing in the Social Sciences: The Context of Discovery* (Stanford University Press, 2014), edited by Richard Swedberg.

PAST PROGRAMS

SPRING 2014

Saturday February 1: [Erik Angner](#), GMU Philosophy:
"Information, Coordination, and Market Intervention in F.A. Hayek"

Saturday February 22: [Eric Hammer](#), GMU Econ doctoral student:
"Adam Smith, Moral Sentiments, and the Welfare State."

Saturday March 22: [Jonathon Diesel](#), GMU Econ doctoral student:
"Adam Smith's Inferior-Superior Relationships and the Competition of Ideas"

Saturday April 5: Daniel Klein, GMU:

[“Ought as an Is: On the Positive-Normative Distinction”](#)

With commentary by Solomon Stein, whose [critical commentary](#) on Klein’s book prompted Klein’s paper.

Saturday April 26: Raymond Niles, GMU Econ doctoral student:

“The Heroic Theory of the Business Cycle: Joseph Schumpeter and the Austrian Theory of the Business Cycle”

FALL 2013

Saturday, Sept 14, 2013: An internal colloquium of the 895 Readings course:

- Harrison Searles discussed Brandon Lucas’s dissertation chapter on the Hayekian Narrative.
- Austin Middleton discussed Lucas’s chapter on pursuing honest income as distributive justice.
- Dan Klein discussed Mark Bonica’s dissertation on reputation in Adam Smith.

Saturday, October 5, 2013:

- Will Fleming will present on a paper joint with Dan Klein, “The Origins of the Use of ‘Liberal’ in a Political Sense of the Term: Adam Smith and William Robertson”
- Paul Mueller, “Adam Smith’s Views on Consumption and Happiness”

Saturday, October 12, 2013:

David Levy, presenting joint work with Sandra Peart, “F.A. Hayek and the ‘Individualists’”

Saturday, October 19, 2013: An internal colloquium of the 895 Readings course:
We will treat the dissertations by Michael Clark and Christopher Martin.

Saturday, November 9, 2013:

- Stephen Kunath, "Adam Smith and the Natural Rights Republic: Contrasting Enlightenment Views on the Political Order"
- Austin Middleton, “A Taxonomy of Justice, based on Adam Smith”

Saturday, November 23, 2013:

- Harrison Searles, “Adam Smith and Friedrich Hayek on Humankind from Small Band to Commercial Society”
- Stephen Kunath, “An Unnaturally Short Introduction to the Natural Law, Ethics, and Virtues as Taught by Thomas Aquinas”

PAST PROGRAMS

Spring 2013

Saturday February 9:

[Dr. Mark Bonica](#) (GMU alum), Baylor University:

“Towards Natural Liberty: Smith's Hopeful Efforts towards a Highly Libertarian Jurisprudence”

Saturday March 23:

[Paul Mueller](#), GMU econ doctoral student:

“Adam Smith's Warnings against the Governmentalization of Social Affairs: A Close Look at *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*”

Saturday April 13:

Daniel Klein, GMU:

“Some Distinctions for Analyzing Liberal Discourse”

Saturday April 27:

Garett Jones, GMU econ:

“How Human Capital, including IQ, Shapes National Institutions”

Fall 2012

Saturday October 6:

Christopher Martin, GMU alum and winner of the 2012 GMU Econ's Snavely Prize, now Fellow at the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, University of Richmond:

“Equity Besides: Adam Smith and the Status of Laborers”

Saturday October 20:

Austin Middleton, GMU PhD student working on Adam Smith and justice:

“Adam Smith on Justice: Treatments by Smith Scholars”

Saturday December 1:

David Lipka, Prague University of Economics:

"Max U: Prudence-only, or Not Even Prudence?"

Saturday February 18:

Nathanael Snow, GMU PhD student: “[Abolition of Slavery in Great Britain: Abolishing Transitional Gains Traps](#)”

In attendance: Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, Nathan Snow, Austin Middleton, Pavel Kuchar, Jeff Horn.

Saturday March 24:

Pavel Kuchar, Fulbright Scholar from Prague visiting GMU:

“Surrogate Motherhood Contracts in the United States: The Moral and Economic Effects of Legal Enforcement”

In attendance: Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, Austin Middleton, Pavel Kuchar, Tony Quain, Mary Clare Peate.

Saturday April 28:

Anthony Quain, GMU doctoral student:

“Positional Externalities as an Argument for Tax Progressivity: A Critical Analysis”

Saturday May 5:

Daniel Klein, **Austin Middleton**, GMU PhD student:

“Adam Smith and Four Justices: Commutative, Distributive, Esteem, and Platonic”

Klein will present a classification; Middleton will present results of a comprehensive content analysis

Fall 2011

Saturday September 17:

Brandon Holmes, GMU MA student in Philosophy:

“Adam Smith on Education: A Critique of Andrew Skinner and Others”

In attendance: Zachary Bartsch, Darwyn Deyo, Blake Johnson, Dan Klein, Pavel Kuchar, Steve Kunath, Paul Mueller, Kevin Rollins.

Saturday October 1:

David Hedengren, GMU PhD student:

“Self-Selection in Life Insurance: Propitious or Adverse?”

In attendance: William Bruntrager, Dave Hedengren, Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, Ryan Moseley, Thomas Stratman.

Saturday October 15:

Christopher Martin, GMU doctoral student and John Marshall Visiting Research Fellow, University of Virginia:

“The Fortunes of Sympathy in Economics”

In attendance: Dan Klein, Pavel Kuchar, Steve Kunath, Chris Martin, Paul Mueller, Tony Quain, Kevin Rollins.

Saturday November 12:

John Robinson, GMU PhD student, and Daniel Klein: “[Property: A Bundle of Rights](#)” Along with thoughts on [Richard Epstein’s](#) and [others’](#) defense of “bundle”

In attendance: Luke Faraone, Dan Klein, Pavel Kuchar, Steve Kunath, Tony Quain, John Robinson, Kevin Rollins, Jennifer Storm, Vlad Tarko.

Saturday December 3:

Stephen Kunath, GMU PhD student: The Thomistic-Aristotelean conception of the common good in light of Alasdair MacIntyre.

Spring 2011

Saturday Feb 12, 2011:

Christopher Martin, GMU doctoral student and Institute for Humane Studies:

“Adam Smith’s Libertarian Justice for the Poor”

In attendance: Mark Bonica (by wire), Chris Flemming, Mike Foley, Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, Chris Martin, Tony Quain, John Robinson.

Saturday Feb 26, 2011:

Michael Clark, PhD GMU and University of Baltimore:

“The Virtuous Discourse of Adam Smith: The Political Economist’s Measured Words on Public Policy”

In attendance: Mike Foley, Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, Mike Clark.

Saturday March 26, 2011:

Mark Bonica, GMU doctoral student and US Army:

“Adam Smith on Reputation: Is It Covered by Commutative Justice? Did He Favor Defamation Laws?”

In attendance: Mike Foley, Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, Mark Bonica, Tony Quain, Don Boudreaux, Chris Martin, Alberto Battini.

Saturday April 16, 2011:

Brandon Lucas, PhD GMU, and US Air Force:

“Seeking Honest Profit as Smithian Distributive Justice”

In attendance: Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, John Robinson, Michael Clark, Brandon Lucas.

Saturday April 30, 2011:

Jason Briggeman, GMU doctoral student:

“Leading Health Economists Respond to a Questionnaire on Market Failure and the FDA: An Analysis and Assessment”

In attendance: Dan Klein, Steve Kunath, John Robinson, Mike Foley, Kevin Rollins, Tony Quain, Jason Briggeman, Chris Martin.